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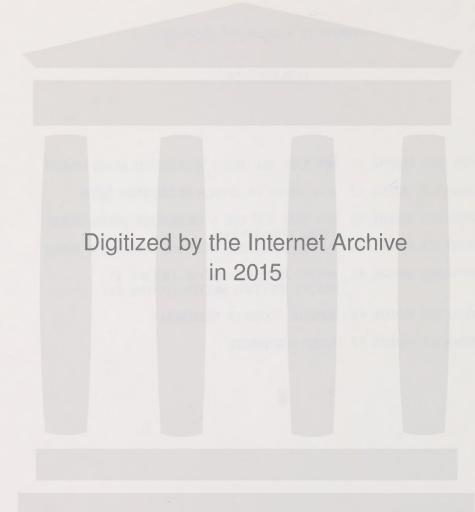


OCT 10 1979

## COMMUNITY RECREATION SERVICES

## PUBLICATIONS

RESOURCE MANUAL #1	NOW THAT YOU ARE A RECREATION BOARD MEMBER
RESOURCE MANUAL #2	A GLOSSARY OF COMMON RECREATION TERMS
RESOURCE MANUAL #3	NOW THAT YOU ARE A RECREATION BOARD MEMBER (Cree Translation)
RESOURCE MANUAL #4	PUBLIC RELATIONS AND YOUR RECREATION BOARD
RESOURCE MANUAL #5	MAKING MEETINGS MATTER (VOLUME I) MAKING MEETINGS MATTER (VOLUME II)
RESOURCE MANUAL #6	WORKING TOGETHER REGIONALLY
RESOURCE MANUAL #7	JOINT AGREEMENTS



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#### I.O THERE'S A MEETING HERE TONIGHT

"Why are you rushing through your dinner, dear? Is there a game on TV tonight? Are we having company?"

"No . . . I have another meeting tonight. The Recreation Board meeting is at 7:30."

"What will you be discussing tonight? Will you be late?"

"I'm not sure. We find out what's on our platter when we get there . . . I sure hope Frank runs a more orderly meeting this time. I want to be home before midnight."

Probably a rather typical conversation at the dinner table in many homes throughout Alberta. The type of meeting might differ . . . or the husband may be asking the wife the same kinds of questions . . . or the group member may be wishing for more active discussion at the meetings . . . but the scene sounds familiar . . . THERE'S A MEETING ON TONICHT.



## I.I THE AIM: RECREATION BOARDS

All across Alberta volunteers are meeting on various boards and committees in an attempt to improve the quality of life in their

community. Many of these people are members of recreation boards reporting to their elected officials on a broad range of recreation and park concerns. These manuals (Volumes I and II) are aimed at meeting some of the needs of recreation boards in carrying out their mandate. Volume I looks at the "human" side of meetings - reasons for meeting, kinds of meetings, the needs of people within groups and the impact of leadership on a group. Volume II will include an examination of the "nuts and bolts" issues of effective meetings such as use of executive meetings, types of agenda items, the importance of the agenda and minutes, the role of the chairperson, discussion devices and so on.

These manuals will not solve all of the problems you may be experiencing in your meetings but we do feel that they will be useful in making those meetings more productive. Some of what is contained herein could be implemented overnight while other areas will require working on over a period of months.

These manuals will be of greater value if gone through page by page with your Regional Recreation Consultant and, if applicable, your local recreation staff. Hopefully they will not be read and promptly filed but rather used as a constant source of information and guidance as you try to gain maximum mileage from attendance at your meetings.

# 1.2 A MEETING FOR ALL REASONS

Nearly all phases of our lives are governed by organizations. Each of these organizations has been set up for particular purposes although many may have since lost at least their initial sense of direction. In order for these organizations to function democratically and in the best interests of their membership they meet to decide what their role is; what their next steps are; who shall

speak on their behalf; what the membership fees shall be; who shall do the work; and so on. In other words, they discharge their duties and they carry on the purposes of the organization through meetings.

Some meetings are work-oriented such as those held by unions and professional associations; others have a religious orientation such as church services and meetings of deacons or elders; some meetings are educationally-oriented such as playschool or kindergarten meetings or parent-teacher meetings; still others are socially-oriented such as many sport groups and clubs and employee social clubs; while others are community service-oriented such as the Recreation Board, service clubs, youth groups, some sport groups and so on; and how could we forget . . . others are legislatively-oriented such as town council meetings, sessions of the provincial legislature, and public hearings. Meetings for all seasons and all reasons!

## I.3 WHY MEET?

It has long been known that some meetings are a complete waste of time with little, if anything, being resolved. Others are long and tedious . . . very little is accomplished although everyone is talking. Still other meetings are short if not sweet with the group used as a rubber stamp by the chairman . . .



# AND YET PEOPLE CONTINUE TO MEET! DON'T THEY KNOW THAT THE BEST COMMITTEE IS A COMMITTEE OF ONE!!

Recognizing that many meetings cause a high degree of frustration and a low sense of reward causes us to question the aims and objectives of groups in meeting regularly and yet . . . if we carefully analyse each group meeting we find that in fact some things are being accomplished. Meetings do seem to perform several useful functions. Let's examine some of those . . .

## I.3.I MEETINGS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION



Each of us has a need to relate to other people. We are social beings and we need opportunities to meet with others and share with others. We like to talk and sometimes we like to listen! Even if very little is achieved at the meeting, we still belong . . . we still return because our friends will be there. Meetings provide forums for socializing.

# I.3.2 MEETINGS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO BELONG



Each of us needs a sense of belonging, of feeling welcome and comfortable in our group. We need others around us to reinforce our self-concept of being OK and of being useful in helping others achieve or accomplish a task. Meetings, if properly run and if people are aware of each others needs, provide that sense of importance, of belonging and of contributing.

# 1.3.3 MEETINGS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARING IDEAS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE



As individuals we bring to each meeting a certain amount of knowledge, ideas and experience that we possess. That scope is limited to our own level of understanding gained largely through personal experience. A meeting provides the setting for enlarging that base of knowledge and experience through the sharing that goes on with others in the meeting. Each of us is unique and thus our contributions are collectively much greater than that which we bring to the meeting as individuals.

# I.3.4 MEETINGS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMITMENT TO COMMON GOALS AND ACTION

Membership in a group entitles everyone to share in the decision-making process that occurs in meetings. Points are argued for and against; proposals are refined, enlarged and adapted to become more acceptable to everyone in the group. Not everyone need totally agree; in fact some may hold quite different opinions. The key is that each is consulted and that through the sharing of opinions, a sharing or commitment to group decisions and goals results.

A dictator approach may be quicker but it is highly doubtful if the group as a whole feels committed to supporting the decisions.

\* MEETINGS SHOULD IMPLY DISCUSSION; DISCUSSION \* SHOULD IMPLY CONSENSUS; CONSENSUS SHOULD IMPLY COMMITMENT; COMMITMENT SHOULD IMPLY ACTION.

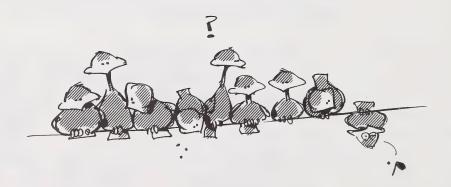


#### I.3.5 MEETINGS ESTABLISH ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN GROUPS

Meetings provide the forum for each individual to understand the general aims of his group, who's who in the group, and what their own role is or is perceived to be. New members on the board often come in with very little understanding of the aims and objectives of the board and even less certainty about their own role as a new member.

Meetings, for them, set the stage, reveal the main and supporting actors and describe the plot.

Meetings also serve role-reinforcing functions for established members. They enable the executive to take on leadership functions and the chairman to exercise his/her brand of control. Other roles are also reinforced - the silent supporters, the emerging leader, the Doubting Thomas, the aggressive protagonist. Pecking orders are established, roles defined and relationships settled.



#### 2.0 MEETING HUMAN NEEDS - IN MEETINGS

There are a lot of different forces at work when people come together in a meeting. We have already touched on some of these in our previous section detailing the functions of meetings . . .

<u>Interaction</u> . . . <u>Belonging</u> . . . <u>Sharing</u> . . . Decision-making . . . Role Reinforcement

Regardless of why people join groups or why they attend meetings each brings with him certain human needs which all of us share, in varying degrees. Has your board ever set aside a part of a meeting to discuss the needs of the people attending your meetings? Have you, as a chairman or executive member, ever wondered why certain members contribute readily while others do not? Has your board developed a clear understanding of your personal needs and goals and whether or not they are likely to be met through the progress of the board? Are you losing good members who quit because of disenchantment with what's happening in your meetings?

- \* IN THE MIDST OF ALL OUR BUSY LIVES WE HAVE TO REMEMBER \*
  THAT EACH OF US HAS NEEDS. THESE NEEDS MUST BE
  RECOGNIZED BY OTHERS AROUND US IF WE ARE TO BE SATISFIED
  WITH OUR RESPECTIVE ROLES.
- \* Stop NOW and consider the following needs of people in groups. Do you as a recreation board member share these needs? How do they influence the effectiveness of your meetings?

#### 2.1 SENSE OF BELONGING

# \* I NEED TO FEEL NEEDED

As a person attending this meeting as a part of this board,  $\underline{I}$  want to know that I belong. I want to know that when I enter

the room people are actually happy to see and welcome me. I need to know that you want me as a group member because I'm me and not because I'm a recent graduate of Toastmasters International, a gifted organizer, a skillful fundraiser, a budding politician and a multi-millionaire. Despite those 'handicaps', I need to feel needed for being me!

#### 2.2 SENSE OF PLANNING

# \* I NEED TO SHARE IN PLANNING GROUP GOALS

It is important for me as an individual Board member to be a part of the process of setting goals for the Board. I want to know that those goals represent all of our expectations rather than simply those of the executive or of the Council. I know that the Board's mandate is set down in general terms in the Municipal Government Act, the Recreation Development Act and our own Town Bylaw (or Regional Agreement), but that shouldn't hinder us from setting our own goals within those broad terms of reference. Besides, I want something I can understand and not terms that must even be challenging to the 'Law Society'.

# 2.3 SETTING REALISTIC GOALS

# \* I NEED TO KNOW THAT OUR GOALS ARE WITHIN REACH

Now that we've agreed to jointly plan our goals for the Board, I need to feel that they represent reasonable expectations and not some "pie in the sky gobbly gook". Let's not say that we are going to have programs for everyone this year if all we have so far is minor league hockey and baseball. Maybe we should aim at improving the childrens' programs this year as our main goal. Let's not say that we intend to have beautiful park areas if one small playground is all we'll accomplish this year.

#### 2.4 SENSE OF PURPOSE

### \* I NEED TO FEEL THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING WILL HELP THE COMMUNITY

Sure we may have individual needs to fulfill but I'm here because I thought that the recreation board was set up to help the community and I'm here to help. Do our recommendations to council help in their decision-making process? Do they approve our positions or ignore them? I need to know as a board member that our decisions as a board can be translated into actions that benefit other people. Can we stop and review our last board meeting minutes and find instances where that has happened?

#### 2.5 CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND RULES

\* I NEED TO KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME AND I NEED A VOICE IN SETTING OUR GUIDELINES

When I was asked to sit on the recreation board, I assumed that somebody would sit down with me and go over the expectations of the board, of the elected officials and of the public and that I would be given a review of our board's policies. I know that I won't feel totally comfortable with my new role until that is done nor will I be able to contribute as fully to the board as I would like. I also need to be a part of a yearly review of the rules of our group - how are the decisions made? Who is responsible for carrying them out? What are the limits of our authority? What are our individual responsibilities? What is my role in our annual meeting with council?

#### 2.6 SENSE OF CHALLENGE

## \* I NEED TO HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT CHALLENGE MY ABILITIES

I didn't join this Board because I thought it would be easy. I joined because I wanted an interesting challenge. I like being involved in the community and I want to put my talents and efforts to work for my community. Put me on active committees - committees that have a clear mandate and a tight schedule. We'll get the job done and report back to you. Do you need some ideas on fees for the use of the arena? - our committee will look into it for you and report its findings. Let's not just talk about the problems - LET'S DO SOMETHING.

#### 2.7 SENSE OF PROGRESS

## \* I NEED TO KNOW THAT WE'RE MOVING FORWARD

At our first meeting of the new year we set our goals for the year. All of us took part in the discussion and each of us accepted some responsibility. In order to know that we are on the right track, I would like us to stop for a moment and review the first six months (or nine months) and see what we've got done and what's left on the platter. Have we been spinning our wheels or are we moving ahead?



#### 2.8 STAYING INFORMED

## \* I NEED TO KNOW

Mushrooms might grow in the dark, but I sure don't. I need to be kept up-to-date on all the information that the board has received. Did those funds come in that we applied for? How did our hockey teams do in the provincial championships? Did council reject our recommendations regarding the budget? I elected an executive to handle the correspondence and to be our spokesmen but not to keep everything from us. How am I to know what's happening if the information is not flowing?

### 2.9 FEELING OF CONFIDENCE

## \* I NEED TO FEEL CONFIDENCE IN OUR CHAIRMAN

I want to feel that regardless of the situation, our recreation board chairman is going to show discretion and retain the confidence of each of us. We elected that person as our spokesman and he is our figurehead regardless of whether we are in a board meeting or he is attending a council meeting or a public function. I need his support and understanding. I expect fair and consistent treatment and recognition and he is going to receive my loyalty.

### 3.0 LEADERSHIP OR 'WHY SOME MEETINGS DRIFT"

How many board members have witnessed or experienced the following kinds of meetings:

- much is being said but little is accomplished
- small discussion groups forming within the larger group
- discussion regarding items not on the agenda
- discussion which goes on and on until it dies a natural death
- a few people dominating the remainder of the group
- the executive making all of the decisions and simply asking for ratification - the old "rubber stamp" treatment
- an overpowering chairman who runs the meetings like a military manoeuvre
- a meek-mannered chairman who encourages discussion but who doesn't encourage decision-making.

The list is endless and so is the frustration of trying to be a productive part of the group in a non-productive atmosphere.

What then is the key to satisfying meetings? What makes the difference between those that are to be enjoyed and those that must be endured?

\* Perhaps the most important element is LEADERSHIP

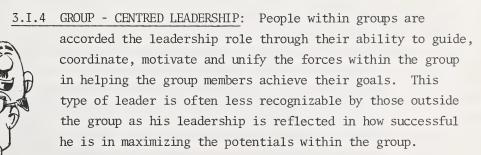
PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE GOALS WHICH THEY FIND DESIRABLE . . . IT IS THE FORCE THAT MOVES INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TOWARD SOME ACCOMPLISHMENT.

### 3.1 KINDS OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership roles may be acquired in various ways. Not all leaders are elected nor do all simply evolve from a group situation. A person may acquire a leadership role through:



- 3.I.I INHERITED AUTHORITY: Many examples exist of people receiving a leadership role through inheritance or birth, such as a royal family, religious sect or family corporation. This type of leadership is exercised largely through the power accredited to the position as a leadership symbol.
- 3.I.2 HIGH LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT: Some individuals have reached such high levels of achievement in areas of specialization that they are identified as leaders in their fields. Their opinions are highly respected and they hold positions of considerable influence.
- 3.I.3 OFFICIAL LEADERSHIP: Leadership roles are often conferred upon individuals through official appointment or election in an organization. This leadership is associated more with the position than the person although some individuals occupying such positions exhibit greater leadership qualities than others. Thus, for some the leadership role is only exercised as a result of the position while in others their own leadership qualities evoke such recognition.





The concept of leadership like so many other broad concepts has shifted considerably over the years. Early theories of leadership focused largely on the individual and on personal qualities that leaders seemed to inherit or develop early in life.

- 3.2.I The "Trait Theory" of leadership focuses on the belief that an individual must possess certain personal and social characteristics, or traits, in order to achieve leadership. This theory stresses that individuals achieve their leadership role and status as a result of personality.
- 3.2.2 The "Situational Theory" of leadership stresses the point that leadership is more related to the environment or situation in which it occurs. Leadership, according to this theory, only emerges if the circumstances are right for interaction of the leader with the group. Hence, leadership qualities in one situation will not necessarily meet the needs of the group in a different situation.
- 3.2.3 The "Group Dynamics Theory" is based on the premise that leadership is determined by group performance. Thus a leader leads only in the sense that he is able to facilitate the achievement of group goals. This theory of leadership involves both the leader and the group members working together to satisfy their needs.

# 3.3 LEADERSHIP STYLES

There are essentially three basic styles of leadership, each reflecting certain strengths and weaknesses. These styles are not necessarily exclusive in practice as the same leader may be capable of adapting portions of each style depending upon the demands of the situation and his own characteristics and abilities. On the other hand certain leaders do exhibit one style only and thus have varying degrees of success depending upon the nature of the group and the situation.

3.3.1

3.3.3



The "Authoritarian Leader" centralizes all authority in himself. He believes that he knows better what others in the group should believe and do and after having made his decision, he directs the behavior of others towards his pre-determined ends. This type of leader does not have any confidence in the decision-making abilities of his followers and therefore retains all authority and power to himself.



The "Democratic Leader" feels that it is his job to help or enable his group to arrive at decisions and to determine purposes. He encourages interaction among his group members and builds self-confidence in them. While he exercises guidance, he generally does so in an open and flexible way. This style of leadership relies on the willingness and ability of the members to develop their skills of listening, clarifying, questioning and participating.



The "Group-Centred Leader" gives complete freedom to the group to resolve its own problems and to seek viable solutions. He attempts to establish commitment by all members to participate in the decision-making process and then he works with the group through his new role as a common member. Group-centred leadership is the most difficult to attain. It demands that the leader be willing and able to transform himself into a group-centred person. It requires the leader to believe in the ability and motivation of the member to select appropriate responses and to make wise decisions.

These styles vary from the extreme of "total leader autocracy" to the other extreme of "total group autonomy". At one extreme the leader makes the decision and announces it while at the other extreme the leader states the ultimate target to be achieved but gives the group complete freedom in how to achieve it.

For recreation board members as well as for other groups it is important to recognize that these are the extreme positions and that most often the style that they would be a part of would likely lie somewhere in between. Researchers have stated that the actual style chosen depends largely on three factors: 1) forces in the leader himself, 2) forces in the situation and, 3) forces in the subordinates or group members.

Forces in the leader include: his value system, his confidence in the group, his own style and the security he feels in the situation.

Forces in the situation include: the amount of time pressure, the type of problem to be solved and the type of organization or group of which they are a part.

Forces in the group include: their prior experience in making decisions, their actual competence, their tolerance, their desire to be involved, their expectations and their need for growth, esteem, companionship and the like.

# \* Effective leadership can be measured in terms of:

- a. establishing group goals and policies,
- b. determining group strengths and weaknesses,
- c. involving all members to the limits of their energies and their level of commitment, and
- d. arriving at appropriate solutions or responses.

#### SUMMARY

Many of us spend a considerable amount of time in meetings for a variety of reasons and purposes. Meetings form an important part of our lives as we attempt to achieve common goals and solutions to problems. It is important that we recognize why we meet and what needs we have as we become a part of the group. Due to our concern with how much we accomplish in meetings and how satisfied we feel after the meeting, it is important that we understand what makes some meetings satisfying and others frustrating. We have now reviewed some of the dynamics of meetings which have perhaps broadened our understanding. Let us proceed to look at the mechanics of 'making meetings matter''.

"Making Meetings Matter" (Volume II) outlines such areas as: executive meetings, types of agenda items, the role of agendas and minutes, roles of the chairperson and members and discussion devices and hints.

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Copies of 'Making Meetings Matter' (Volume I and II) as well as the other manuals in this series can be obtained free of charge by contacting any of the Department's regional recreation consultants in the following locations:

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